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## Managing Restraint and Seclusion: Information for Patients and Families

The health care staff at Houston VAMC is committed to preserving your patient safety, rights, dignity and well-being. Our goal is to reduce and eventually eliminate the use of restraint and/or seclusion in our hospital. Also, our staff works to prevent patient care situations which could lead to the use of restraint and/or seclusion.

### What is restraint?

Restraint is limiting your movement of any body part without your permission. A few of the types of restraint that can be used are hand mitts, wrist and/or ankle straps, or vest restraints.



### What is seclusion?

Seclusion is separating you from others and used only to safeguard you and others.

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## Why and When might restraints/seclusion be used?

Restraints/seclusion may be used to keep you, as a patient, from hurting yourself or others and when needed to prevent interruption in your medical treatment plan. Restraints can help you as a patient from:

- Falling out of a bed or chair,
- Removing IV tubes or bandages,
- Scratching at wounds or dressing,
- Wandering out of a safe area, and
- Hurting self or others.

Restraint/seclusion will only be used when other options have failed. Some of the methods tried before restraints are used can be:

- Talking with you about your care,
- Giving you things to do to draw your attention away from activities that may cause harm to you or others,
- Having a family member or sitter stay with you,
- Lowering the bed closer to the floor,
- Moving you to another room where you can be closely watched, or
- Using protective items.



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## What is your Role as a Patient or Family Member?

Family involvement is necessary in patient care and can help the facility become as restraint/seclusion free as possible. You and your family are encouraged to participate in decisions about your care. You might be asked to share with the staff how your family member behaves that might cause a need for restraint or seclusion. Your input is valuable in helping us to provide a safe environment and the best care possible.

If the use of restraint and or seclusion becomes necessary your family will be notified with your permission and made aware of the reason for use of restraint or seclusion. You will also be asked to share your feelings regarding the use of the restraint and or seclusion.

### How can you help?

- Once restraints are used, do not remove or loosen them.
  - If you or your family members have any questions or concerns about restraints or seclusion ask the doctor or nurse.
  - The nurse or doctor may give you special instructions so please carefully follow these instructions.
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## Who can I contact if I have questions?

We welcome your questions and ask that you share any concerns you may have regarding the use of restraint and or seclusion. Any questions/concerns that you have should be directed to the staff person such as the doctor or nurse who is giving care and treatment to you or your family member.



PATIENT AND FAMILY HEALTH  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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Developed By:  
**The Restraint Reduction Team**

Endorsed By:  
**Patient Health Education  
Committee  
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VETERANS PLACING HEALTH FIRST  
THROUGH EDUCATION

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